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Seattle, Wash. 98101
296-442-7620

BLACK EX-JOB CORPSMAN
MEETS WITH SECRETARY BRENNAN

WASHINGTON -- Walter Mitchell has come a long way from his days as a high school dropout in Vaiden, Miss., to his recent meeting with Secretary of Labor Peter J. Brennan.

As the Job Corps launched its tenth anniversary, Mitchell sat before the fireplace in Secretary Brennan's office and chatted with him about his experiences.

In 1966, Mitchell joined the Job Corps. In 1968, after completing the heavy equipment course conducted by the International Union of Operating Engineers at Jacobs Creek, Tenn., Mitchell went to work as a journeyman in the New Haven, Conn., area.

A member of Local 478 in Hamden, Conn., Mitchell now earns $8.85 an hour. After attending night school for two years, he received a diploma from Hillside High in New Haven, and went on to take night classes at the University of New Haven.

But now that Mitchell has tasted success, he's not quitting. He's set his sights on becoming a civil engineer - and indications are he'll make it.

When Mitchell was in Washington for his meeting with Secretary Brennan, he was interviewed by the Voice of America for a brief spot on the breakfast show of the worldwide English broadcast. So touched was the interviewer by this young man's story that he taped a full-length interview as background for a half-hour documentary on his life.

The overseas audiences are bound to be impressed. It's not merely a "rags to riches" story - although Mitchell does, indeed, now have many material possessions.

The impact lies in the fact that Mitchell, a disadvantaged American, was able to turn to his government for help. Through the Job Corps, he was given the opportunity to make the most of his inborn talents and find a lucrative spot for himself in the world of work.

Secretary Brennan was impressed with the extra effort that Mitchell has put into mastering his job and trying to further his career. As the Secretary put it, talking with Walter Mitchell was "like a breath of fresh air."

Yes, some of the fresh air from that Mississippi farmland found its way into the Secretary of Labor's office in the form of a self-assured young man who became that way because of the Job Corps program.

# # #

BRENNAN CALLS ON BLACK PUBLISHERS TO AID IN INFORMING JOBLESS BLACKS ABOUT AVAILABLE PROGRAMS, SERVICES

WASHINGTON -- Blacks and other minority group members are among the hardest hit by the current recession, Secretary of Labor Peter J. Brennan told a group of black publishers at a White House briefing.

Deviating from a prepared text, Brennan said he had visited the Detroit area to explore ways and means of speeding aid to the jobless there, many of whom are black. He pledged continued efforts by the Labor Department to help spur prompt and efficient help to the country's jobless workers during a most difficult period.

In prepared remarks for the National Newspaper Publishers Association, Brennan said:

"Because your readers suffer a disproportionate share of unemployment, you are in a unique position to help the Labor Department inform jobless black Americans of government assistance available to them.

"Unquestionably, as editors and publishers of some of the most widely read black publications in the country, you serve one of the Labor Department's most important constituencies."

The Labor Secretary said that in today's economy -- where many workers face serious troubles in the job market -- minority group workers are faring among the worst.

"The Labor Department is armed with laws and programs designed to assist these workers," Brennan added.

He told the group that one of the best ways we have found to reach minority-group workers with information that can help them is through the media they read, watch, listen to and believe in.

He said that in today's economy "more and more of our citizens are struggling with the loss of their jobs while they cope with a steady upward climb in the cost of living."

(MORE)

"And minority group workers are some of those struggling the hardest," Brennan noted.

Brennan pointed out that on New Year's Eve, President Ford signed emergency legislation providing aid for jobless workers through extended and new unemployment benefits and authorized additional public service jobs.

"We need your help to get this vital information to the unemployed men and women who need it so badly," Brennan said. He pointed out that the Labor Department is responsible for enforcing some 80 laws protecting workers' wages, hours and working conditions and outlined many of the programs and services administered by the Labor Department.

He also said: "Problems facing the minority business person are much like those facing minority workers."

"President Ford is deeply concerned with equity in this area," Brennan stated.

"We are encouraging Labor Department contractors and grantees to subcontract with minority firms and to use minority-owned banks.

"And like President Ford, we believe strongly that helping minority employers become successful in the business world is just as important as helping minority workers succeed in the job market," Brennan added.

In his concluding remarks Brennan emphasized the importance of the minority media "to reach many of those people who need our services most."

"By working together, we can get these people the information and help they need to pull out of their difficulties.

"In doing so, we will be contributing a great deal to the health of our economy, as well as to the strength of our American system," Brennan added.

###

STATE SERVICES TO FARMWORKERS TO BE MONITORED
BY LABOR DEPARTMENT'S MONITOR ADVOCATES

WASHINGTON -- The Labor Department's Manpower Administration has announced that monitor advocates for farmworkers, including migrant and seasonal workers, have been appointed for each of its ten regional offices.

They will monitor activities of the state employment services to ensure that a full range of manpower services -- counseling, testing, job referral and other -- is provided migrant and seasonal farmworkers.

Under the program, a complaint system has been developed that enables the migrant workers, and all workers in general, to register grievances with the nearest employment service office or the Labor Department's regional and national offices.

The Manpower Administration representative will supervise operation of the system, headed in each state by a state monitor advocate of the state employment security office.

Following are the federal monitor advocates with location of the regional office and states served:

--Stanley Schorr, Boston (Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, Vermont);

--Edwin T. Redding, New York (New York, New Jersey, Puerto Rico);

--Franklin Wanamaker, Philadelphia (Delaware, Maryland, Pennsylvania, Virginia, West Virginia);

--Copeland Pace, Atlanta (Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee);

--Bruce Samuels, Chicago (Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Minnesota, Ohio, Wisconsin);

--Maurice Odem, Dallas (Arkansas, Louisiana, New Mexico, Oklahoma, Texas);

(MORE)

--Juan J. Castillo, Kansas City, Mo. (Iowa, Kansas, Missouri, Nebraska);

--Ernest Quintana, Denver (Colorado, Montana, North Dakota, South Dakota, Utah, Wyoming);

--Gilbert Apodaca, San Francisco (Arizona, California, Hawaii, Nevada), and

--Richard C. Mellado, Seattle (Alaska, Idaho, Oregon, Washington).

# # #

Week of February 3, 1975

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NEW CONSTRUCTION STANDARDS DUE,
STENDER ANNOUNCES

SAN FRANCISCO -- Assistant Secretary of Labor John H. Stender announced that new job safety standards to protect workers in tunnels and excavations will be issued shortly.

Stender, head of the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA), told a construction industry audience that the standards would be "ready for promulgation this spring."

Speaking before the Reinforced Steel Contractors' Assoc. in San Francisco, Stender also said a project to consolidate those construction industry standards presently included among general industry rules and regulations would shortly be completed.

"But important as standards are to the total effort to reduce workplace injuries and deaths, of themselves they lack the power to save a single life, to prevent a single job injury," Stender declared.

"They must be backed by an effective enforcement program and an equally effective program of voluntary compliance."

Stender called on the construction industry to initiate "self inspections" of worksites as "part of your business activities.

"No one should be more familiar with his workplace than the employer," Stender said, emphasizing voluntary compliance with job safety and health regulations as part of "the concerted effort" needed to either reduce or eliminate workplace hazards.

###

OSHA SIGNS JOB NOISE PACT
WITH CONCRETE BLOCK MAKERS

WASHINGTON -- The U.S. Department of Labor and the National Concrete Masonry Association have signed a job noise compliance agreement covering some 600 concrete block manufacturers.

In a joint statement, Assistant Secretary of Labor John H. Stender, head of the Department's Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA), and Paul Lenchuk, association president, said the purpose of the agreement is to encourage employers to overcome technological and economic problems in reducing job noise exposure by using constructive research, meanwhile safeguarding employee hearing.

The signing ceremony at the Labor Department was attended by Under Secretary of Labor Richard F. Schubert.

Pointing out that the vast majority of concrete block manufacturers are small businessmen, Stender said that the agreement provides "positive evidence that small business is not opposing the federal job safety and health law, but is actually seeking ways to make the law and OSHA standards work by protecting employee safety and health."

The manufacture of concrete blocks is an inherently noisy process, with noise levels generally exceeding OSHA's currently allowed limit of 90 decibels averaged over an eight-hour workday.

Under the voluntary agreement, the Arlington, Va., based association will undertake studies aimed at reducing employee exposure to noise at concrete block plants across the country by Dec. 1, 1976.

OSHA will continue to inspect company facilities to insure employees are safeguarded from excessive noise levels and that occupational safety and health standards other than noise are adhered to.

Under the agreement, any pending contested citations for noise violations before the independent Occupational Safety and Health Review Commission will be negotiated for settlement between the companies concerned and the Labor Department.

The association commits itself to furnishing OSHA and making available to concurring unions listed in the agreement periodic reports detailing progress in developing engineering and administrative controls, and in individual company implementation of those controls.

The agreement calls for periodic meetings between OSHA, the association, and the unions to review its implementation.

Three international unions whose affiliates represent concrete block workers in organized plants have concurred in the agreement. They are:

-- International Union of Operating Engineers;

-- Laborers International Union of North America, and

-- Operative Plasterers and Cement Masons International Association.

Copies of the agreement are to be distributed to all collective bargaining representatives of affected employees and posted at manufacturing facilities of all participating companies.

# # #

OSHA PROPOSES RULES FOR STATE CONTRACTS
ON JOB SAFETY, HEALTH CONSULTATIONS

WASHINGTON -- The Labor Department's Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) has proposed rules under which states without an approved job safety and health program could enter into contracts to provide on-site job safety and health consultation to requesting employers.

Under the rules, states conducting such programs would be reimbursed with federal funds.

States with OSHA-approved plans would not be eligible since other OSHA rules permit consultation services in these states.

State personnel trained by OSHA would make on-site consultative visits to:

-- explain to employers which OSHA standards apply to their workplaces;

-- explain the technicalities of standards;

-- state where employers do not comply with standards; and

-- advise employers how they can comply.

Comments on or objections to the proposal must be submitted by Feb. 14 to OSHA's Associate Assistant Secretary for Regional Programs, Docket No. SP-5, Room 820-MNWA, 1726 M St., NW, Washington, D. C. 20210.

The proposed rule appeared in the Federal Register Jan. 15.

# # #

WORK STOPPAGES 1974

WASHINGTON -- Idleness resulting from work stoppages in 1974 was 0.24 percent of total working time (2.4 days per thousand), well above the levels recorded in 1972 and 1973 but lower than those in 1970 and 1971, according to estimates of the U. S. Department of Labor's Bureau of Labor Statistics.

The year began with the same first quarter idleness in 1974 as in 1973 when the level was the lowest recorded since 1966.

In anticipation of, and with the removal of wage-price controls on May 1, unions demanded substantial wage increases in an effort to catch up with the accelerated rise in consumer prices. For these reasons, and because 1974 was a heavy collective bargaining year, all measures of work stoppage activity rose in the second quarter and continued at high levels throughout most of the year.

About one-third of the overall increase in idleness in 1974 was directly attributable to strikes involving 10,000 workers or more.

Over 60 percent of the stoppages that began in the first 6 months of 1974, compared with 48 percent in all of 1973, resulted from the inability of union and employer negotiators to agree on the size of general wage increases.

An estimated 5,900 strikes started in 1974, over 500 more than a year earlier and the highest number of stoppages ever recorded. Some 2.7 million workers participated in these disputes, an increase of one-half million from 1973 and 1 million from 1972. About 1.6 million fewer workers struck in 1974 than in 1970 and 1971.

Idleness in 1974 reached a 4-year high of 48 million workdays, over 70 percent greater than the previous year. This increase was distributed across the economy. Nearly 7 million days of the increase were attributable to stoppages of 10,000 workers or more.

On the average, strikes were larger in 1974 than in 1973. The average 1974 strike involved 458 workers, compared with 421 the year before.

Walkouts in 1974 continued for an average of about 5 1/2 more days than in 1973, as measured by days idle per worker involved. The average length of strikes in 1974 was 17.8 days compared with 12.4 in 1973. Except for 1970, when the average duration of a strike was 20 days, 1974's level was higher than any previous year since 1968.

The 28 major stoppages in 1974 (those involving 10,000 workers or more) accounted for 26 percent of the days away from the job and 30 percent of workers withholding their services, compared with 21 and 30 percent respectively for the preceeding year.

In 1974 four strikes each accounted for one million days of idleness or more. In 1973 there were no stoppages of this magnitude. Two of these 1974 stoppages were in the construction industry, one was against Western Electric Company, and the other was a nationwide strike in the bituminous coal industry which idled 120,000 workers.

Eleven of the 28 major stoppages were in the construction industry. Together they accounted for 7.0 million days of idleness, more than one-half the total for major strikes. In 1973, five construction stoppages caused 1.2 million days not on the job, 21 percent of the idleness in major strikes. Although five public school strikes of 10,000 workers or more occurred in 1973, none was recorded this year.

# # #

Week of February 3, 1975

MAJOR COLLECTIVE BARGAINING SETTLEMENTS, 1974

WASHINGTON ---Major collective bargaining settlements during 1974 provided for substantially larger wage adjustments than agreements reached in 1972 and 1973, although somewhat lower than those reached in 1970 and 1971, according to preliminary estimates issued by the U. S. Department of Labor's Bureau of Labor Statistics.

Wage-rate adjustments negotiated during 1974 averaged 9.8 percent for the first year of the contract and 7.3 percent annually over the life of the contract, compared with 5.8 and 5.1 percent, respectively, in 1973.

These measures exclude possible gains under "cost-of-living" escalator (COLA) clauses.

Nearly 5.0 million workers were covered by the 1974 settlements, primarily in the steel, communications, construction, retail trade, apparel, and bituminous coal mining industries.

The 1974 data relate to 1,171 collective bargaining settlements in the private nonfarm economy, each of which affected 1,000 workers or more. Although approximately one American worker in five in the total labor force is a union member, only one in nine is included in an agreement covering 1,000 workers or more in the private nonfarm sector.

Other key features of the settlements reached during 1974 include:

-- Wage and benefit adjustments combined (in contracts covering 5,000 workers or more) averaged 10.7 percent for the first year and 7.7 percent annually over the life of the contract, compared with 7.1 and 6.1 percent, respectively, in 1973.

-- The contracts had an average duration of 30.2 months.

(MORE)

In the manufacturing sector, wage-rate adjustments averaged 8.7 percent in the first contract year and 6.1 percent annually over the life of the contract, compared with 5.9 and 4.9 percent, respectively, in 1973.

In nonmanufacturing, adjustments averaged 10.4 percent in the first year and 7.9 percent annually over the life of the contract, compared with 5.7 and 5.3 percent, respectively, in 1973.

In the construction industry alone, wage adjustments averaged 11.0 percent in the first year and 9.5 percent annually over the life of the contract, compared with 5.0 and 5.1 percent, respectively, in 1973.

The size of settlements was influenced by the possibility of additional increases under escalator clauses. Contracts containing COLA provisions, covering 60 percent of the workers under major settlements concluded during the year, provided for annual wage-rate adjustments of 6.1 percent over the life of the contract, exclusive of any potential "cost-of-living" adjustments under these formulas; contracts without escalator clauses provided for annual adjustments averaging 9.1 percent. This compares with gains of 4.9 and 5.3 percent, respectively, in 1973.

Thus far in the contract term, gains have averaged 11.7 percent in settlements containing escalator provisions that were reached during 1974. This includes first-year negotiated increases and escalator adjustments put into effect during the first contract year.

During the year, escalator provisions were introduced in 164 settlements, covering 869,000 workers. This is the largest increase in escalator coverage since 1971, when the steel and communications industries adopted such clauses in their contracts.

The pick-up in coverage was in a wide variety of industries--including construction, bituminous coal, and apparel where such provisions were previously uncommon. Escalator clauses now cover approximately 5.3 million (51 percent) of all workers in major bargaining units.

(MORE)

major bargaining units.

(MORE)

During 1974, workers under major collective bargaining agreements received an average wage-rate adjustment of 9.2 percent, compared with 7.0 percent in 1973. Wage-rate changes going into effect during 1974 consisted of gains under the settlements discussed above, plus scheduled adjustments during the period (deferred increases) resulting from contracts negotiated in earlier years, and wage changes resulting from the operation of escalator clauses.

Of the 9.2 percent effective adjustment, 4.6 percent was attributable to current bargaining, 2.6 percent reflected the influence of deferred changes, and 1.9 percent was the result of escalator adjustments.

These figures reflect actual wage changes prorated over the entire 10.3 million workers under private nonfarm agreements, including those not receiving an adjustment. During the fourth quarter of 1974, the average effective wage-rate adjustment amounted to 1.5 percent.

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Week of February 3, 1975

REAL EARNINGS IN DECEMBER 1974

WASHINGTON -- Real gross average weekly earnings increased 0.6 percent from November to December, after allowance for the usual seasonal change, the U.S. Department of Labor's Bureau of Labor Statistics reported.

This increase was the result of a 0.7 percent rise in average weekly hours which more than offset a 0.7 percent increase in the Consumer Price Index.

Over the year, real average weekly earnings were down 4.7 percent.

A rise of 12.2 percent in the Consumer Price Index and a drop of 1.6 percent in average weekly hours overcame a 8.7 percent increase in average hourly earnings. Before adjustment for the increase in the Consumer Price Index and for seasonal change, average weekly earnings were $159.87 in December, compared with $149.51 a year earlier.

Real spendable earnings -- average real weekly pay of all workers reduced by Social Security and Federal income tax rates applicable to a married worker with three dependents--rose 0.4 percent from November, seasonally adjusted.

Over the year, real spendable earnings were down 5.4 percent owing to the 4.7 percent decline in real weekly earnings and a 0.8 percent increase in the effect of taxes.

The Hourly Earnings Index in dollars of constant purchasing power was 106.2 in December, seasonally adjusted, unchanged from November. Compared with a year ago, the index is 2.6 percent lower. The index excludes the effects of overtime in manufacturing and of interindustry shifts, such as the shift of workers between high-wage and low-wage industries.

###

THE CONSUMER PRICE INDEX -- DECEMBER 1974

WASHINGTON -- The Consumer Price Index rose 0.7 percent in December to 155.4 (1967=100), the U.S. Department of Labor's Bureau of Labor Statistics reported.

Higher prices for sugar and most other types of food, housekeeping supplies, gas and electricity, and public transportation were responsible for a large part of the December rise. The effect of these increases was partially offset by declines in prices for beef, fresh fruits and vegetables, clothing, and used cars.

On a seasonally adjusted basis, the rise in the December CPI was 0.7 percent, compared with 0.9 percent in each of the two preceding months. The food index rose 0.7 percent after seasonal adjustment in December, the smallest increase in 5 months.

The December increase of 0.4 percent for the nonfood commodities index was the smallest monthly rise in 1974.

The services index rose 0.9 percent, about the same as in October and November.

For the calendar quarter that ended in December, the CPI rose at a seasonally adjusted annual rate of 10.1 percent. Seasonally adjusted annual rates of increase in the first 3 quarters of the year were 14.2 percent, 10.3 percent, and 14.2 percent, respectively.

For calendar year 1974, the CPI rose 12.2 percent.

About two-fifths of the annual increase in the CPI was due to a 13.2 percent rise in prices of nonfood commodities. The nonfood commodities index rose at a rapid rate in the first 3 quarters--at a seasonally adjusted annual rate of 15.3 percent.

In the final 3 months of 1974, the index rose at a 7.3 percent rate, as price increases for many consumer goods were smaller than earlier in the year and gasoline prices declined.

(More)

The food index rose 12.2 percent for the calendar year that ended in December and accounted for a fourth of the rise in the CPI. The food index rose sharply in the first quarter, slowed substantially in the second, and accelerated again in the third.

Food prices continued to rise at a rapid rate in the fourth quarter--advancing at a seasonally adjusted annual rate of 14.6 percent. Prices were higher for sugar and products which contain sugar and for most other types of food except beef.

About a third of the rise in the CPI in 1974 was due to an increase of 11.3 percent in the services index. The rise in the services index moderated somewhat in the fourth quarter--to an annual rate of 10.9 percent, from 13.9 percent in the third quarter.

Charges for many types of services, including mortgage interest rates, increased at a slower pace in the fourth quarter than earlier in the year. However, charges for services such as gas and electricity and most types of public transportation continued to rise at a rapid rate.

Price increases for energy items--which include gasoline, motor oil, coal, and residential natural gas and electricity--accounted for over a tenth of the increase in the overall CPI in 1974.

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(More)
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CLERICAL WORKERS ONE OF
FASTEST GROWING OCCUPATIONAL GROUPS
(One of a Series)

WASHINGTON -- Clerical workers are expected to total 19.7 million by 1985--up from 14.2 million in 1972--and second only to professional workers in growth rate.

So say two labor economists in the U. S. Department of Labor's Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS).

In an article published in the Winter 1974 issue of the BLS Occupational Outlook Quarterly, Neal Rosenthal and Hall Dillon say clerical workers are expected to comprise 19.4 percent of the total work force in 1985, compared to 17.4 percent in 1972.

However, their growth rate will be slower than in years past, largely because of a projected slowdown in the growth rate of trade and manufacturing industries, which employed about one-third of all clerical workers in 1972.

Rosenthal and Dillon predict that clerical jobs will be "greatly affected" by changing technology.

"New computers, office equipment, and communication devices are expected to restrict job opportunities in some clerical occupations and increase employment in others," the authors add.

The use of electronic computers and bookkeeping machines to process routine and repetitive work is expected to reduce the use of clerks in jobs such as filing, payroll, inventory control and customer billing.

However, secretaries, stenographers, typists, and receptionists--expected to account for about half of the total growth in clerical jobs by 1985--are not likely to be affected significantly by technology.

###

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Dear Consumer

These Cities Are Saving Gas

By Virginia Knauer
Special Assistant to the President and Director
Office of Consumer Affairs
Department of Health, Education and Welfare

What is your community doing to save gasoline? Is your local government encouraging people to form carpools? To use mass transportation, instead of driving their own cars?

I know of a few cities that have made wise moves in this direction, with splendid results.

● In Los Angeles, two metered entrance ramps to the San Diego Freeway are now set aside for carpools with two or more persons. The number of carpools has more than doubled.

● In San Francisco, carpools of three or more persons have been given separate lanes in the toll plaza area of Bay Bridge. The number of carpools has increased 80 percent.

● In the Washington, D.C., area, two lanes on Northern Virginia's Shirley Highway were set aside for buses—back in September 1969, which may set the record for mass transit pioneering.

Before this change was made on Shirley Highway, there were fewer than 2,000 bus commuters on that road. Now, there are 16,000 bus commuters—all saving 10 to 15 minutes travel time every morning. What's more, bus ridership did not decrease when the reserved lanes were recently opened to carpools carrying four or more persons.

As you can see, reserved lanes for buses and carpools can save time as well as energy.

Has your town thought about trying this? Or has your community developed other ways to conserve energy, on a large scale? I would like to hear about new developments so that I can pass them along to all of my readers. I hope you will write to me about what your community is doing; send your letters to Virginia Knauer, Office of Consumer Affairs, Washington, D.C. 20201.

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FILLERS FROM THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF LABOR

An important function of the U.S. Department of Labor's Bureau of Labor Statistics is to provide a wide range of career education material to the public.

# # #

The U.S. Department of Labor's Bureau of Labor Statistics publishes the Occupational Outlook Handbook, which is a useful guide to specific jobs, training and education required, pay, and hiring outlook.

# # #

The Comprehensive Employment and Training Act (CETA), which went into effect July 1, 1974, represented a significant shift toward decentralization of the nation's manpower program.

# # #

The Comprehensive Employment and Training Act (CETA), signed in December 1973, was the first legislation passed by Congress to incorporate the essential principles of special revenue sharing.

# # #

Under the Comprehensive Employment and Training Act (CETA), state and local governments make most of the decisions regarding the kind of manpower training programs to be offered in their areas.

# # #